

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**October 17, 2002  
MEETING NO. 10-02**

**APPLICATION:** HDC02-0228

**DATE FILED:** October 3, 2002

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** Rex F. Murdock  
214 W. Montgomery Ave.  
Rockville, MD 20850



**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:**

The subject property is a single-family residence that faces north on West Montgomery Avenue on a narrow lot with a driveway along the west property line leading to a rear parking area.

**PREVIOUS ACTIONS AT THIS ADDRESS:**

HDC93-0031 Request to build a wood deck, approved 9/21/93  
CAV03-14812 Building shed without permit, filed 9/19/02

Other actions at this address have included complaints or violations for illegal parking, unlicensed rental apartment, and debris stored on premises.

**REQUEST:** The Applicant requests a retroactive approval for 8 X 10 foot storage shed in rear yard and installation of an additional 12 X 16 foot shed in rear yard.



Front and rear views of 214 West Montgomery Avenue



Proposed shed location in rear yard and existing shed



Existing shed



*1. Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.*

The south side of the 200 block of West Montgomery Avenue includes a diverse grouping of 19<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles and some of the oldest houses in the West End. The house at 214 West Montgomery Avenue was built in 1923 and was the only 20<sup>th</sup> century addition to the block until the house next door at 216 West Montgomery was built in 1985.

The house was originally owned by Thomas L. and Ann Dawson while Mr. Dawson was State's Attorney for Montgomery County (1920-1924). The Dawsons lost it due to financial difficulties during the Depression years. At that time, many of the old homes on this block were occupied by descendants of the original owners who offered small apartments or rooms to rent to make ends meet.

The property had a succession of owners during the 1940s and 1950s including the Allnutts and Mohns. The once-stylish block had deteriorated by the 1960s, but several of the houses were rehabilitated during the next decade when the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District was designated. The William Donnelly family owned 214 West Montgomery from 1959 to 1978. The Irwin Schorr family purchased it from the Donnellys and sold it to Ray W. Murdock in 1986.

*2. The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.*

The house is a frame, two bay by three bay, 2 1/2 -story modern side-hall or two-thirds Georgian on a concrete foundation. It is sheathed in wide wood clapboard siding and has a side-gabled slate roof. The house was designed in a modern colonial revival style with details adopted from contemporary craftsman/prarie architecture such as a wide eave overhang, paired and strip windows, and four-light shed roofed dormer.

The existing wood shed is shown in a photograph on the previous page. The proposed shed will be similar in appearance, but twice the square footage. It will be located just northeast of the existing shed. The rear yard is accessed by an alley that connects West Montgomery Avenue to Great Falls Road. An asphalt parking area takes up almost half of the rear yard and the sheds will take up a large portion of the grassy portion of the rear yard. Neither shed will be visible from West Montgomery Avenue, however.

*3. The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.*

The existing shed is 8 feet by 12 feet, or 96 square feet. The proposed shed is 16 feet wide by 12 feet deep (192 square feet) and 8 feet in height. The total square footage of both sheds is 288 square feet. The proposed shed meets the setback and size requirements for the R-90 zone. The exterior will consist of 1/2-inch T-111 siding and an asphalt shingle roof. A building permit has

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not been filed for the existing shed so it is not known if it meets setback and other accessory building requirements.

*4. To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.*

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the HDC approve HDC02-0228 for two wood sheds in the rear yard as they are removable features that are separate from the historic structure and will not have any permanent effect on the architectural or historic features of the house. The sheds will not be visible from West Montgomery Avenue. This recommendation is based on the condition that:

**1. The owner must apply for and be granted a building permit for each shed and all setback, height, and other development standards for the R-90 zone must be met for both sheds. The total square footage of the two sheds may not exceed 25% of the rear yard coverage or 10% of the total lot size, whichever is smaller.**